

Rockford Historic Preservation Commission

June 5, 2007 - 6:00 PM

Conference Room B

Rockford City Hall

Present: Laura Bachelder, Sally Faber, Maureen Flanagan, Ald. Doug Mark, Mark McInnis, Mike Pauly

Absent : David Hagney

Staff : Ginny Gregory, Lucia Rinedollar

Others: Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Wallens, John Wood (Pearson Plumbing & Heating), Mark & Amy Lawrence, Janyce Fadden, Reid Montgomery

NEW BUSINESS

Approval of Minutes

Mike Pauly made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the minutes for the meeting of May 1, 2007 as submitted. The motion was seconded by Sally Faber and **CARRIED** by a vote of **5-0**.

Alderman Doug Mark joined the meeting.

Certificates of Appropriateness

♦ 608 Oak Street

Mark and Amy Lawrence were present to address the Commission on behalf of Jeremy and Emily Klonicki, the owners of 608 Oak Street. They are requesting approval for a two-layered deck. The higher part of the deck would be located from the existing porch extending to the current fence line with stairs to access the driveway, covering the old cement stairway. The lower deck will be level with the bottom stair and will cover the area on the right side of the house. The deck will be made of 6" or 8" treated deck boards with 2" square posts around the railing of the entire outer edge. Mike Pauly advised the Commission that he had gone to look at the property and would be willing to approve the application with the condition that the existing picket fence be maintained. Everyone agreed to this.

Mike Pauly made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the Certificate of Appropriateness for a new two-layered deck as submitted but with the condition that the existing picket fence be maintained. The motion was seconded by Doug Mark and **CARRIED** by a vote of **6-0**.

♦ 1630 Oakes Avenue

Ginny advised the Commission that the owner of 1630 Oakes Avenue was unable to attend the meeting but would be available for the next meeting if necessary. The application is for the installation of two pairs of shutters and the replacement of the front storm door. The shutters will be 12" wide by 55" high and the color will be white. They will be placed on the picture and

bedroom windows on the front of the house. The storm door will be replaced with a solid glass, Charleston style door. The Commission agreed that these changes would be acceptable. They also agreed that a suggestion should be made to the owner to remove the center downspout that is located near the front door.

Mike Pauly made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of two pairs of shutters and the replacement of the front storm door as submitted. The motion was seconded by Doug Mark and **CARRIED** by a vote of **6-0**.

(Ald. Mark left the meeting.)

♦ **821 Garfield Avenue**

Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Wallens, the owners of 821 Garfield Avenue were present to address the Commission. Mr. Wallens was present at the May meeting to explain that he would like to install a ductless mini-split air conditioning system at 821 Garfield Avenue to replace the window air conditioners that are currently being used. The proposed system consists of two units. The first would be installed in the front of the house, to the left of the front windows, with coolant piping that would run up along the outside frame of the windows to the master bedroom on the second floor. The second unit would be installed to the immediate right of the rear entrance with coolant piping running up to the second floor rear bedroom. The piping would be covered with aluminum that would be painted to match the house. The compressor units are approximately 2 feet tall by 3 feet wide by 1 foot deep and would need to be installed on a 6" raised concrete slab to keep them out of the snow. Although Commission spoke favorably about removing the window air conditioners, they had concerns regarding the coolant piping to be run on the outside of the house. Gary Anderson, as a former Commissioner, stated at the May meeting that it has been ruled in the past that piping on the outside of a building is not appropriate. It was recommended at the May meeting that the owner check with his contractor, Pearson Plumbing and Heating, to determine if it would be possible to run the pipes inside the walls.

John Wood, from Pearson Plumbing and Heating, was present at this meeting to address the Commission and answer questions. He showed the Commission an example of the material that would cover the piping on the outside of the house and explained that it would look like another gutter on the house. He stated that to run the pipes inside the walls would cost an additional \$5,000 - \$6,000 dollars and would require tearing out and replacing the interior walls. Although Mark McInnis disputed the logistics of this, it was determined that this would not be an option for the owners. Following discussion, it was agreed that it would be better to locate both units in the rear of the house with all lines being run up inside of one cover.

Maureen Flanagan made a **MOTION** to **APPROVE** the application for a ductless mini-split air conditioning system to be installed at 821 Garfield Avenue with the units to be installed at the rear, or on the side if necessary, of the house. The motion was seconded by Sally Faber and **CARRIED** by a vote of **5-0**.

Janyce Fadden – marketing study

Janyce Fadden, President of the Rockford Area Economic Development Council, was present to address the Commission regarding a study that was prepared by Rebecca Ryan on

attracting and retaining talent in the area, focusing on 23-40 year olds. As part of her report she made 21 recommendations around 5 areas. During the study, she identified the "boomerangs," college graduates that leave town for a few years and then return, as the largest target audience.

The two recommendations below reference the historic districts:

- 1.6 Appropriately adjust the building code requirements for historic downtown properties. Current requirements do not have exceptions for historic buildings which require long and expensive permitting processes. This puts undue financial pressure on entrepreneurs whose economic presence is critical for a healthy downtown.
- 1.7 Support a TIF initiative to freeze property values of historic neighborhoods.

Janyce advised everyone that the committee that commissioned the report by Rebecca Ryan had done fund raising and has money left to invest in recommendations. They are looking for people who are energized and want to implement the changes.

With the historic districts being a possible target area for marketing, Janyce asked if the Commission has information regarding the property EAVs, how many homes in the areas are owner occupied, what the turnover rate is, and how satisfied the residents are in the historic districts. She said that there is a group planning to have a "Jobapalooza" over the Thanksgiving holidays and the historic districts are possible areas that could be marketed during this.

Sally noted that it may be possible to get turnover information from the realtor board.

Ginny stated that she has compared the EAVs in Haight Village to the neighborhood across Kishwaukee Street. They were about equal when the district was created and now they are considerably higher in Haight Village. She advised that it would be possible to do comparisons for the other districts but it would be more difficult finding an area to compare them to. Janyce questioned if it would be necessary to hire an intern to do research and Ginny advised that the Economic Development Division has a summer intern that could do at least part of it. Janyce advised that the steering committee may be willing to help pay for someone if necessary. She also stated that NIU would be likely to give her a break because this is a project that they want to see happen.

Janyce discussed the possibility of more residential TIF districts being established and a loan pool being developed to assist with rehabilitation. Reid advised that we almost have the ability to do the tax abatement program now within our current TIF districts. State law needs to be changed in order for it to be made available city wide. Janyce noted that these things along with the historic tax credits that are available could be used to market homes, in the historic districts, the current TIF districts, and city wide after the law is changed, to the "boomerang" group.

Janyce also mentioned that RAEDC is working with Rockford Local Development Corporation to get access to funds to create a 200% mortgage loan pool. This would enable buyers of older homes to get a large enough loan to cover the costs of rehab as well as initial purchase of the homes.

It was agreed that Janyce and the steering committee should continue to include the ideas discussed in their projects.

Amy Lawrence noted that it would be great if there were some kind of booklet available to homeowners and potential homeowners to let them know what programs are available and how to apply for them. Janyce said that this would be part of the project. She said she will continue to work with Reid's group (the CD department) and will come back to this group for guidance, possible assistance with marketing, etc. She also believes that at some point a customer satisfaction survey should be done. The results of this could also be used in the marketing materials. Another idea being considered for marketing is making YouTubes with young people in the area like the Lawrences and the owners of Kuma's.

326 South 3rd Street – request for advice on driveway

Mark Lawrence, owner of 326 South 3rd Street, advised the Commission that due to a recent car break-in, he is planning to construct a garage on his property. He asked for advice on how to do his driveway due to pavers already in place adjacent to the location of the new driveway. It was suggested that some kind of an actual border be installed between the new drive and the existing pavers. He was also concerned with the amount of driveway necessary due to the size garage being considered. It was agreed that one option would be to only run the pavement to two of the garage bays instead of all three. Everyone agreed that a red, acid stain concrete would be appropriate for the new driveway. The Lawrences will continue to check on zoning requirements and will return when ready to proceed.

OLD BUSINESS

STAFF REPORT

River District Brochures

Ginny showed everyone a new River District booklet on historic downtown architecture and advised that they are available now for \$15.00 each.

Realtor training – update

Sally Faber advised everyone that September is not going to work out for this training. It will be done in October instead.

OTHER

Maureen Flanagan made a **MOTION** to **ADJOURN**. The motion was seconded by Sally Faber. Motion **CARRIED** by a vote of **5-0**.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,
Lucia Rinedollar,
Sr. Administrative Assistant
Community Development Department